

# Oxford High Team A wins State Envirothon!

RAYMOND, MS — For the 11th time in the past 12 years, Oxford High School Team A placed first overall in the State Envirothon Competition, held on Friday, April 26, 2019, at the FFA Center in Raymond. The team will compete at the National Conservation Foundation, NCF-Envirothon Competition at North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC, from July 28 to August 2, 2019. Oxford Team A placed eighth in the national competition in 2018.

In the 2019 State competition, Hillcrest Christian School placed second; followed by Delta Academy, third place; Pascagoula High School, fourth place; and Oxford High School Team B, fifth place.

In addition to placing first overall in the State competition, Oxford High School Team A had the high score in the categories of Current Issue, Forestry, Oral Presentation and Wildlife. Hillcrest Christian School had the high score in Aquatic Ecology, and Sharkey-Issaquena Academy had the high score in Soils/Land Use.

FFA teams receiving awards were: Greene County FFA, 1<sup>st</sup> place; Stone County FFA, 2<sup>nd</sup> place; and Benton County FFA, 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

Twenty-two teams advanced to the State competition from area competitions held on March 22, 2019, in the Delta, South, North and Central areas. Twenty teams competed at State.

The top teams at the State competition received scholarships, and their advisor(s) received a cash award.

Mississippi Envirothon, a program of the Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Commission and supported by Mississippi Association of Conservation Districts, is a hands-on competition designed to challenge students in grades 9 through 12 to explore natural resources. Competitors are tested in the categories of aquatic ecology, forestry, soils/land use, wildlife, and a current environmental issue.

The 2019 area competitions included 53 student



**STATE ENVIROTHON WINNING TEAM OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL TEAM A:** Left to right, Siena Cizdziel, Claire Cizdziel, Gillian Meyers, Anna Kang and Emma Teng. Oxford Team A had the high score in Oral Presentation, Forestry, Current Issue and Wildlife. PHOTO BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC

teams, 288 students in the competition, and 45 teacher advisors on-site who worked with the teams to prepare for Mississippi Envirothon.

Through local soil and water conservation districts, more than 125 volunteers and resource personnel from state and federal natural resource agencies and organizations worked with educators, sharing environmental expertise to prepare the teams for the competitions.

In intensive preparation for the competitions, students received hands-on assistance from the experts, who tested and judged the area competitions, and assisted at the statewide competition.

The Mississippi Envirothon is funded through grants from the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Chevron. Scholarships are funded by Georgia-Pacific Monticello Mill.

*MORE Envirothon photos on page 3*

## John Williams joins MSWCC staff as Delta Area Field Rep

JACKSON, MS — MSWCC is pleased to announce that John Williams has joined our staff as a Natural Resources Specialist I.

In his duties as a Field Rep for MSWCC, Williams will cover the Delta Area of the State.

A native and resident of Brandon, MS, Williams, 27, graduated from Belhaven University with a degree in Biological Science in 2017.

He previously worked at Revell Hardware while attending school and after graduation.

Williams' father is an outdoorsman, which gave him an appreciation for the natural world, he said.

His mentor at Belhaven was his biology professor, who inspired Williams to take a closer look at plants and animals, and to pursue his degree in biological science.

In his spare time Williams enjoys fishing. He is an active member at Trinity Presbyterian Church.

Please join us in welcoming Williams at MSWCC.



JOHN WILLIAMS



### Kids learn about soil, make earthworms

Students at the Peek-A-Boo Preschool in Senatobia show off the earthworms they made in their class

with Tate County Clerk Cathy Tarver (center). The students also learned about soil, had a question-and-answer interactive story time, and received a copy of the Sam E. Soil coloring book.



## MCDEA Summer Conference set for June 26-27 in Starkville

STARKVILLE — This year's MCDEA Conference will be held June 26-27, 2019, at the Hilton Garden Inn in Starkville.

Registration is \$135 and includes lunch and dinner on June 26 and lunch on June 27. Breakfast is free with hotel stay at the Hilton Garden Inn.

If you bring guests, you may order additional meals, however, the additional

meals must be paid for prior to the conference.

Payment for additional meals should be mailed to MSWCC Executive Director Mark Gilbert, 680 Monroe Street, Suite B, Jackson, MS 39202.

The deadline for registration and additional meal orders is May 27. After deadline the registration will be \$145.

The room rate for the hotel is \$109, and the deadline for hotel reservations is June 4. To make hotel reservations, call 1-662-615-9664 and use Group Code MCDEA 2019.

If you have questions, please call MCDEA President Meleiah Tyus at 662-912-4152 or Mark Gilbert at 601-354-7645.

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## State Envirothon teams placing 2-5, and category high scores for Soils/Land Use and Aquatic Ecology



**SECOND PLACE HILLCREST TEAM A**, left to right: Envirothon Coordinator Chelsey Gazaway with team members Emily Lewis, Sarah Grace Brownlee, Aaliyah Newsome, Gage Mitchell and Jared Bewley. Hillcrest Team A also had the high score in Aquatic Ecology.

PHOTOS BY KATHY DOUGAN, MSWCC



**THIRD PLACE DELTA ACADEMY**, left to right: Matthew Allen, Sam Douglas, Bubba Burchfield, Caed Robertson and Noah Andrews.



**FOURTH PLACE PASCAGOULA HIGH SCHOOL**, left to right: Jack Monroe Harrison, Cailey Holliday, Alondra Reyes, Ethan Skinner and Zaniya Matthews.



**FIFTH PLACE OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL TEAM B**, left to right: Anh-Thu Le, Karen Carothers, Zuzu Al-Sherri, Patricia Hughes and Nadeen Al-Ostaz.



**SHARKEY-ISSAQUENA ACADEMY** had the **HIGH SCORE** in **SOILS/LAND USE** at the State Envirothon. Envirothon Coordinator Chelsey Gazaway presents the award to team member Sarah Grace Perkins. Other team members included: Kelley Womble, Ty Covington, Alex Anthony and John Bryce Fulton.



**HIGH SCORE AQUATIC ECOLOGY.** Accepting the award from Envirothon Coordinator Chelsey Gazaway (at left) is **HILLCREST CHRISTIAN SCHOOL** team member Sarah Grace Brownlee.

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